COMING FROM SCHOOL.

BY ALICE CARY.

Like down of thistles the moments fled,
So soft they were, and light,
When we hid from the plashing rain
Under the hedge by the side of the lane
Coming from school at night.

Ah, never a rose bloomed half so red,
And never will again,
As that I broke from the flowery hedge
Hding under its briery edge
Out of the plashing rain!

I cannot think of a word you said,
But your voice was sweet and low,
And with the raindrops in your hair
I thought you never had looked so fair,
And I gave you my rose, I know.

And when the angels to have you, pled,
And the balance of life was tried,
That rose I gave you beside the lane
Hiding under the hedge from the rain
Just kept you on this side.

Alas, my beautiful rose is dead,
And gone is love's dear prime,—
In the hair of my darling, now, the rain
Has frozen to snow, and we both are fain
To hide from the storms of time.

A PLAIN HEROINE.

BY MRS. MARY C. VAUGHAN.

My heroine was not at all beautiful. In fact, she was decidedly plain, and not in the least of the stuff of which heroines are usually made. I am sorry to be obliged to announce the fact, but it is better always to deal frankly, and I am afraid that I never could persuade any one to believe that Clarissa Harland was even pretty.

There were pretty girls, however, in Stratford. Amorette Henderson was one of them. People even said that she was beautiful, and if a stranger inquired who was the prettiest girl in Stratford, any townsman or townswoman who was present, would mention, with evident pride, Amorette Henderson. But no one thought of Clarissa Harland in that connection.

Ah, well! They judged by the sight of the eye, and soul-beauty was to them a hidden light. Externals only have value for such. That which dwells within, making lives lovely, and homes happy, and radiating blessings on all around, has for them no beauty, because their moral perceptions are dull and blind.

For several summers Charles Lee had been at Stratford. When the intense heats of midsummer approached, he would leave his close, dusty office, and the hot, noisy streets of the city and seek the cool shades of Stratford, sojourning meanwhile beneath the roof of the long, low, brown farmhouse where his mother's youth had been passed, and which, with its few surrounding acres, formed his sole inheritance.

He was not rich enough to prove very attractive to the shrewd dames of Stratford, who looked somewhat askance upon any attentions which he paid their daughters, until it was rumored that he was already engaged to a lovely girl, whose acquaintance he had made during his collegiate course, and to whom he would be married as soon as he was successfully established in his profession. Thereafter, he was free of Stratford society.

Of course, he knew everybody, and so when his friend Frank Ardey came down to pass a few weeks with him at the farm house, to fish and shoot with him in the trout-streams and over the hills, and partake of good Mrs. Burrough's hospitality, it followed that he was as able to instruct his visitor in regard to the inhabitants of Stratford, as in regard to its topography.

On the Sabbath that followed Frank's arrival the friends attended the village church, and Master Frank, to whom the whole scene was new, for he was city born and bred, made excellent use of his eyes. Better, I think, than of his ears. For though he saw all the pretty faces, the plain faces, and the queer faces; all the neat, tasteful dresses, the quaint, old fashioned dresses, the Sunday suits of the middle-aged men, that had served at their weddings, and received a weekly airing on the Sabbath ever since, the poke bonnets of the grandmothers, and the smart, showy leghorns of the ruddy farmeresses; though he noted the brown deal pews, innocent of paint, and the plaster walls, guiltless of fresco, I am afraid, if put under oath, he could not have given one word of the text, nor a single head, from firstly to fourteenthly, of the sermon.

It followed, therefore, that as he and Charles lounged together, in the farm house parlor, that afternoon, their talk was more of the people they had seen, than of the truths which had been spoken in their hearing.

"Yes, you have a queer set of people, here in Stratford," Frank said, "veritable originals. Why, some of your women must have employed Mrs. Noah's milliner, and if any mortal tailor made those coats, he *must* have lived before the flood. I never saw anything like them, never! Why they would make the fortune of a showman and attract crowds in any city."

"Yet they were worn by good men and true," Charles replied, for he loved Stratford and Stratford people for his dead mother's sake. "'Fine feathers make fine birds,' Frank, but it takes more than clothes to make a real, true man."

"Yes, I know you've grown wondrously democratic since coming here so much," sneered Frank. "When you are nominated for congress, you will want the votes of these good citizens, eh?"

Then seeing that Charles looked a little hurt, he hastened to say—

"But there are some pretty girls, here. I saw one—a perfect beauty, hands and feet a little too large, perhaps, and not *bien gantée*, nor *bien chaussée*, but, for a country damsel, really beautiful. She with the dark, plain girl beside her, like a shadow to relieve her brightness, I mean. Who is she, Charley?"

"I suppose you mean Amorette Henderson. People call her the most beautiful girl in Stratford, but in my opinion her friend Clarissa Harland, is infinitely more lovely."

"What, the girl who was with her! So dark and ugly, with a complexion like muddy coffee, a wide mouth, a nose that is decidedly of the genus pug, hair of indefinite color, and expressionless eyes of a dull grey! And this Miss Amorette (is that the name?) a real little beauty, 'roses and lilies,' 'diamond eyes,' 'teeth like pearls,' 'sunny ringlets,' and all that poets rave about,—not so lovely as she! You've surely taken-leave of your senses, Charley Lee!"

"By no means," Charley replied, good humoredly. "By no means, Frank. I only know the two girls thoroughtly, and judge of them by that knowledge. I confess that when Amorette came home from boarding-school, during one of my visits here, she burst upon me like 'a vision of delight.' I almost forgot poor Emma, whom I'm sure I love better than all the world beside, in gazing upon her and watching her bewitching ways, for she is a finished coquette. But I did not long wander from my allegiance. She is a fair type of modern young-ladyhood, and I soon found her out. She is like the Elle-women of the German fairy tale 'who are fair in front, but if you walk round them you find them hollow as a piece of stamped leather.' But Clarissa Harland is a genuine woman. She has little outward beauty, only a graceful, girlish form, and exquisitely shaped hands and feet, and the sweetest voice in the world. Yes, even Emma's is not equal to hers, though I love its music. But she has a lovely soul. She is strong, and brave, and enduring, as she is hopeful, cheerful and loving. So true a woman is she, that one forgets such accidents as an unhandsome complexion, a wide mouth, a nose less straight than the Grecian. Ah, Frank, if you must fall in love, let it be with her."

"Ha, ha, ha," laughed Frank Ardey. "Quite a rhapsody, Charley, eh? Wonder what 'poor, dear Emma' would say could she hear you?"

"Nothing, sir, nothing. She knows all about Clarissa from my letters and descriptions. Both are true women, and Emma rejoices that I have such a friend as Clarissa, while Clarissa takes the greatest possible interest in my lovely fiancée."

"Ah, well," answerod Frank, turning to his book, with a yawn. "I don't doubt that she'd make an excellent friend, if one could contrive never to look at her. But I never could endure your paragons, even if tolerably handsome. I like coquetry. A woman may be slightly diabolical, even, if she's only handsome. So when you get ready to introduce me to Miss Henderson, I intend to make love to her in the most approved style. Maybe it will be 'diamond cut diamond,' but that will make my time pass the more spioily."

"Well, remember that I've warned you," said Charley, and there the conversation ended.

Such flirting had never been witnessed in Stratford as presently took place between Frank Ardey and Amorette Henderson. Good, unsophisticated people who had never departed from the traditions of their fathers, in love, any more than in agriculture or politics or religion, whose idea of love-making was a formal "company keeping" on Sunday nights, opened their eyes very wide at the walks and the sails, the drives and the rides, at the daily visits, and the moonlight strolls, of the enamored pair. Dire were the predictions for Miss Henderson's future, very harsh the judgments delivered upon that "city beau," great the wonder, lively the gossip, wild the surmises.

Nevertheless, Frank thought he perfectly understood his game, but Miss Henderson understood hers better. Before he was aware where he stood he found Miss Henderson's company a necessity. He could not pass a day without seeing her. He was infatuated, blindly infatuated, and, in spite of the warnings he had received, in spite of some tales of her ill-temper, her utter want of moral sense, of the real deformity of soul that her sparkling face and graceful figure hid from most eyes. but which Charley had discovered and deemed it right to tell his friend, ho was on the point of offering her his heart and hand. To this consummation she was adroitly leading him. She was determined to become Mrs. Ardey, and already dreamed about the splendid home in the city that should be hers, the gems and costly robes she would wear, and the social successes she would achieve.

But, before she was quite sure of her victim, an accident saved him from her grasp. A blessed accident it was, a blessed release, though it came through much pain, and suffering, and weary nights of anguish.

Frank had sent for his horse, Thunderer, long before, and often accompanied Miss Henderson on long rides about the neighborhood. One day he had left her at her home, and, as a heavy shower was evidently impending, was hurrying homeward at Thunderer's best speed.

The clouds before him were black as the sky of a starless night. They rested low down upon the hills that lay beneath the purple pall of their dark shadow. The stillness of the impending tempest brooded over the summer landscape; but, anxious only to escape the fury of the storm, Frank rode on, scarcely heeding the sublime grandeur of the scene.

Suddenly, from out that black cloud, leaped a vivid flash of lightning that lit the whole horizon with its lurid, blinding glare, and, ere it died away, the roar of thunder seemed to shake the heavens and the earth. Thunderer reared upright, then, after crouching almost to the earth, bounded bodily from the ground. In an instant, ere the roar had subsided, almost ere the flash had passed, his hoofs went thundering wildly along the stony road, while his rider, senseless and mangled, lay beneath the stone wall of Mr. Harland's garden, where the shock had thrown him.

They carried him into the house. Hours, days passed ere he knew aught consciously. Knew whose hand tended him, whose roof gave him shelter. Then he awoke to find the plain face of Clarissa Harland bending over him, as with soft, skillful hand, she adjusted the bandages upon his wounded head.

Day after day he lay there in all a child's weakness, tended unwearyingly by this noble woman. He only thought then that she was kind, and wondered that Amorette's beautiful face was never once visible in his room of suffering. Day after day he longed for the fair vision, but he was nearly convalescent ere he was gratified.

Amorette had no mission to the suffering. Her hand had no skill, her voice no tone of cheer, there was no sympathy in her soul to find echo in loving, hopeful words. So she staid a little while, sitting there in her handsome new bonnet, her shining, rustling silk dress, her flashing bracelets and brooches, trying to think of something to say, but failing because her heart dictated nothing; and then, hoping that "Mr. Ardey would soon be well again," she took her leave. Frank found himself wishing, much to his surprise, that she migbt never return.

It was not long ere he discovered another mental phenomenon. He found himself longing for the presence of Clarissa Harland. The room seemed suddenly darkened when she left it, as she was often forced to do, for she was a motherless girl, and had charge of her father's large family, and her plain face illuminated it the moment she returned.

As he lay there upon his pillow, he pondered all that Charles Lee had said of her, and he could not help acknowledging that his friend had not said too much of her voice. Its tones, whenever heard, from the distant rooms, convorsing with the family or guests, soothing or reproving the children, who loved and obeyed her, giving orders to the work people, counselling with her father in the business matters he loved to submit to her clear judgment, was always sweet and pleasant. There was a geniality, a genuineness in its tones, that struck sweetly upon the chords of the heart, and made music in return, though tried sorely by life's struggles they would jangle to a ruder touch.

But when she spoke to him, it was best and sweetest of all. He loved to make her speak, to detain her with questions, to seek many explanations—anything that he might have those tones to dwell upon when she had gone. Long before this he had forgotten that her face was plain. He saw, more and more, clearer and clearer, the bright, beautiful soul shining through her features, and informing their ugliness with its own beauty.

These feelings grew and grew all through his long convalescence, when he mingled, more and more, with the family, and saw and heard Clarissa in the midst of the home circle, where she bore cares and accomplished duties that would have been too great for a weaker or less genial nature than her own.

By this time Charles Lee had gone back to the city. He had lingered until his friend was sure of returning health, and then he was forced to go away, and went less reluctantly because he knew that he could not leave Frank in better, or kinder, or more loving care. For he had watched the progress of events, and knew, better than the principal actors in the drama, the true condition of their hearts. He knew that Frank had forgotten Clarissa's plainness, and loved her not less than he reverenced her. He knew that Clarissa, woman-like, had loved him, whom, through his deepest danger, she had tended with woman's devotion. He saw that all would yet be well with them, and was content that time and opportunity should reveal to them their mutual, sweet secret.

But little more remains to be told. Frank and Clarissa were married, but not very soon. For Clarissa was strong enough to resist her lover's pleadings, even when sustained by those of her own heart. She would not leave her father until her younger sister was able to take her place in the family, and gave one year to training her for her work.

Then there was a wedding in quiet Stratford, such as never had been seen there before. Amorette Henderson was not there; she was away on a visit to Boston. But there were scores of Frank's friends from the city, dashing and gay, with many beautiful women among them. But Frank loved best to look upon the plain face of his bride, and has never, though years have passed, regretted the hour that saw her made mistress of his heart and home.

"YET ONCE AGAIN."

BY SALLIE M. BRYAN.

Yet, once again, Walter,
In Dreamland, we've met;
By Midnight's dim altar
Where star-lamps were set,
My heart seemed to falter:
"I did not forget!"

I told thee how sadly
Thine eyes haunted mine,
While I'd worshipped, half-madly,
Forms brighter than thine—
And would have, most gladly,
Heaped dust on thy shrine!

"Another sun's kisses
Have darkened thy cheek—
Another love's blisscs
Didst thou too not seek?
Lest Fear's serpent-hisses
Should madden me—speak!"

While thus I was sighing
Each wild, broken word,
How sweet a replying
My startled soul heard!
What stilled strings there lying
To music were stirred!

But back where the sweeping
Of south-winds wakes flowers,
Tho angel that's keeping
The Dreamland's pearl-towers,
Led thee—'mid the sleeping
Of birds in bright bowers.

And left me—where whitely
The North-hills arise,
Leaning coldly, though brightly,
'Gainst desolate skies,
Round whose drear bosoms, lightly,
Tho drifting snow flies.

* * * *

When shadows betide me
Again to Dreamland
What angel shall guide me
To clasp thy white hand
And see thee beside me
As erst thou didst stand.

And thou—when Night's singing
The tropics to sleep,
Is thy heart never winging
Its way o'er the deep,
And mournfully flinging
Dead flowers where I weep?

DOMESTIC JARS.

BY SYLVANUS COBB, JR.

"I should like very much to visit the mountains," said Oliver Mason. He spoke to his uncle, who was on a visit for a few days, and who had been telling him about the delightful scenery among the highlands. "I know I should enjoy it. I think I can make arrangements to go next week."

"I'm sure I can't go next week," spoke Matilda, who was just turning out a cup of tea for Uncle Eben.

"Why not?" asked Oliver, looking up into his wife's face.

Now when Matilda Mason said she was sure she couldn't go, she spoke from the force of an old habit. She was not rugged, and being somewhat weary from the effects of her day's labor, which had been a little increased by the presence of their visitor, she did not feel in the mood for any great exertion. She did not feel, just then, as though she should want to visit anywhere; so she spoke from impulse, and without much thought. But when called upon to give her reason she was not willing to acknowledge that she had none. She simply replied—

"Because I can't."

"But *why* can't you?" persisted Oliver.

"Because I don't want to." She said this rather emphatically.

"You can go if you will," returned the husband, with a show of feeling.

"I suppose I know whether I can go or not," was the wife's rejoinder, and she spoke quite tartly. "I tell you I can't go. If you wish so much to go, I suppose you can go alone. You needn't trouble yourself about me."

Oliver did not dare to say any more. He was well aware that any further remark from him would only bring something still more bitter from his wife, and he felt that she had already exposed enough of her predominant weakness to his uncle. A cloud was over them, and the meal was concluded in comparative silence. The husband was unhappy; the wife was unhappy; and Uncle Eben was, to say the least, very thoughtful.

In the course of the evening the uncle and nephew were left alone. A dead silence had lasted for some minutes, when Uncle Eben very quietly asked—

"What do you think about the mountains, Oliver?"

The young man started at the question; for he was at that moment thinking of the scene which had transpired at the tea-table.

"O—we'll go, I guess," he replied, after a moment's hesitation.

"Do you think Matilda will go?"

"Yes—I think so. She'll come 'round before that."

Another season of silence followed, which was finally broken by Oliver, who remarked, with some hesitation in his manner,—

"Uncle, I'm sorry that little scene occurred at the supper-table this evening; but you must not judge of Matilda's character by what you then saw and heard. She is a good wife—one of the best of women."

"I know she is," returned the old man.

"She is indeed," resumed Oliver; "and were it not for that one fault a cloud would never arise upon our domestio joy."

"She is apt to run off in that way, isn't she?" said Uncle Eben.

"Yes. She does it often; and these are about the only domestio jars we ever have."

"They are unpleasant," remarked the uncle.

"Very unpleasant," added the nephew.

"If I were in your place I would put a stop to them, my boy."

"If I could lead her to break herself of that habit, I'd give anything."

"I think you could do it."

"How?"

"Just break yourself first."

"Break—myself?" repeated the young man, regarding his uncle with amazement.

"Aye," quietly proceeded the latter. "Just commence by breaking yourself of your habit in this matter, and the work will be done."

"But—uncle—I don't understand. You saw and heard all that transpired at the supper-table?"

"Certainly."

"And did you not see that Matilda was beyond all reason?"

"I saw that you forced her beyond all reason."

"I forced her? Uncle Eben, I don't comprehend you. I'd like to have you explain."

"That's just what I want to do, my boy. Now listen: Your little *domestic jars*, as you call them, generally come in the shape of *disputes*. Isn't it so?"

"Why—yes."

"Exactly. And you are probably aware that one person cannot hold a dispute alone. It takes at least *two* to make a dispute."

"Aye," returned Oliver; "but both may not necessarily be at fault. You saw how it was this evening. You saw that I stopped as soon as I found where Matilda was bound."

"I noticed that you stopped after the mischief had been done," said the old man, with a significant nod of the head. "But don't look so surprised, my dear fellow, for it is just as I say. It is the most easy thing in the world for us to be blind to our own faults, especially where there is fault in another quarter. Of course, Matilda did not do right, but that can be no excuse for you."

"Go on," uttered Oliver, in a tone of resignation. "I should like to hear you through."

"Then answer me frankly: Do you not think that you have more power of self-control than your wife has?"

"Yes—I do."

"And are you not aware that your wife is easily moved to fretfulness?"

"Yes."

"You know that she is more apt to be oversensitive when a little fatigued, than otherwise?"

"Yes."

"You knew that she was somewhat weary this evening?"

"I knew she was tired."

"Exactly. And now tell me: When she said she was sure she could not go to the mountains at the time you had mentioned, what did you suppose she meant?"

"I knew just what she meant. She meant nothing."

"In short, Oliver, you knew that she spoke thoughtlessly, and only from force of habit."

"Yes."

"And you knew—mark me: You *knew*—that she had no good reason for not being able to go?"

"Of course I did."

"Then why did you ask her for a reason?"

"Why?—Why—because—"

"Well—I'm waiting for your answer, my boy."

"Why," said Oliver, considerably perplexed, "it was very natural that I should ask the wherefore of such a direct assertion."

"And yet you were well aware that she had no reason to give; and knowing this, you were not wise in pushing her; for experience should have taught you that such a step could only result unpleasantly. By thus pushing the question you forced her to do one of three things: either to fabricate an excuse, to acknowledge that she had none, or to turn it upon her self-will. Of course you knew she would not tell a deliberate falsehood; and you knew that she would not willingly expose her own folly; so the only course left for her, was the one she took. Isn't it just as I state it?"

"Why, yes, uncle,—I won't dispute you."

"Then," pursued the old man, "I think you may easily put away the evil of which you complain. When Matilda spoke this evening—when she said she could not go with you—you knew in an instant—you knew by the very tone in which she commenced, and by the expression upon her fair face—that she didn't mean anything by what she said. Isn't it so?"

"Yes."

"Then you must see that it rested with you to provoke, or prevent, the dispute and consequent jar. Of course her thoughtless remark was not calculated to please you; but, you know very well that she did not intend to injure your feelings. She had no malice. She didn't mean anything. It was only when you pressed her for a reply which you knew she could not give with reason, that she exhibited real ill-feeling. I know, that to a mere casual observer, your conduct would have appeared eminently proper, while that of your wife would have seemed altogether blameworthy. But you and I, my boy, must look down into the heart, for there alone can we find the necessary facts for a true solution of the problem. You know what is in Matilda's heart—how much love, and truth, and virtue, and faith, and devotion there is in it. Now bear with her; bear with her, Oliver. The next time she makes one of those thoughtless, fretful assertions, let it rest as it falls. Do not catch it up, and nurture it, for it will be sure to grow and increase under such treatment, to the injury of you both. Follow this rule for awhile, and see if you are not the gainer."

Oliver Mason saw the reasonableness of his uncle's remarks, and he offered no argument against them. In fact, he rather pledged himself to make a trial of the plan suggested. And it was not long before he had an opportunity.

Tea was ready, and Oliver had just come in from his office.

"Uncle Eben," he said, as they moved up to the table, "you remember James Washburne?"

"Yes—very well."

"He called in to see me this afternoon, and is very anxious to see you. He left a family invitation for us to take tea, and spend the evening with him, on Friday."

"I sha'n't go," quickly remarked Matilda.

A flush came upon Oliver's face, and his first impulse was to argue the matter; but he remembered himself in season. It required an effort to restrain the old inclination, but he did it. He knew that his wife meant nothing by what she had said. She felt then as though she did not wish to visit anywhere, and under the influence of that feeling she had spoken.

"Very well," said the husband, as mildly as could be. "I didn't promise that we would come. I only told him I would see about it."

"Well—*I* can't go," asserted the wife, more positively than before.

"Then we won't any of us go," returned Oliver, with a smile. "We'll have a pleasant time at home. So that is disposed of. These biscuit are nice, love. Upon my soul, I think I find the most comfort at my own table, after all."

"And well you might, my boy," echoed Uncle Eben. "You were a lucky dog when you secured this little bit of feminine humanity,"

Uncle laughed, and nephew laughed, but Matilda did not feel exactly at ease. She felt very much as an awkward speaker must feel, who has got himself into the last clause of his speech, and don't know how in the world to wind off. She felt very much dissatisfied with the manner in which she was forced to leave her remarks, but there was no help for it. She gazed up into her husband's face very expectantly; but he gave her no opportunity for further remark on the subject of the visit, so she finally fell into the good-natured train which had been laid for her.

"There, my boy—what d'you think of that?" cried Uncle Eben, when they were alone.

"I think it worked well," returned Oliver.

"It cost you a *little* effort at the outset?"

"Yes—it did."

"Then you see very plainly that you have a *habit* to overcome. But stick to it, my dear fellow, and you'll conquer. She'll soon give up her habit, when she finds that you furnish none to match it. Didn't you notice how uneasy she was when she found the matter settled?"

"Yes."

"Well—if you had disputed with her, she would have had good grounds for laying all the blame of her unpleasant feelings upon your shoulders; but as it was, she was forced to the conviction that, if she experienced any unpleasant emotions, they were wholly the result of her own action. Stick to it, Oliver, and you'll throw your domestic jars all out of doors in a very short time."

And it proved just as Uncle Eben had said. It often required an effort of self-control on Oliver's part; but when Matilda found that she was sure to be taken at her word, and that her husband found no fault, but quietly and pleasantly submitted to her decision, she began to be more guarded in her speech; and ere long her own eyes were opened to the folly of the habit she had entertained. As she began to break clear from it, she could see its dark, thorny sides, and as quickly as possible she cast it off altogether.

And thus, by the exercise of a little reason, and a little self-control, was banished an evil which had not only produced many Domestio Jars, but which might in time, had it been allowed to grow, have undermined, by its jarring, the foundation of even Love itself.

GRUMBLERS.

BY ANNA CORA RITCHIE.

Hans Christian Andersen, in one of those tales of marvel, by which he has wrought an attractive setting of fiction around a gem of truth, describes a magical mirror of diabolical invention which distorted and rendered hideous the fairest objects it reflected. When the mirror was fractured, certain individuals gathered up the fragments and made spectacles of them, and henceforth viewed all creation through a perverted medium.

These are the malcontents of the present day. An unbroken frown keeps the gloomy glasses fixed across their brows. And the fault-finding instinct is quickened to such a degree in the wearers that they daily endure a self-imposed martyrdom. Let them walk through the smoothest, greenest, choicest paths of life, the thorns of discontent are always piercing their feet, and all the burs in the lanes are sure to cling to their garments. Let the sun shine ever so brightly, no light is received into their rayless eyes, and yet they discover and magnify all the motes in its beams. They move about with lugubrious countenances and ascetic speech, as though a perpetual night-mare sat upon their souls. They pour the cold water of their presence upon the faintest flame of enthusiasm that dares to betray its existence, and seem to be tortured by a frantic desire to extinguish all the Promethean fire in the world.

Southey paints a genial class of beings who are "willing to be pleased and thankful for being pleased without thinking it necessary that they should bo able to *parse* their pleasure, like a lesson, or give a rule or reason why they are pleased." The grumblers, in a precisely opposite spirit, set out upon their compulsory journey through life. They start with the conviction that the universe holds nothing that is worthy to excite pleasure, and consequently form a religious determination that they will not be cheated into a pleasurable sensation.

They are especially subject to all skiey influences, and the weather is an everlasting source of discomfort to them. There is always too much rain falling or the sky is too clear, the drought too protracted, the cold too bracing or the heat too debilitating.

If some more contented and confiding spirit meekly points out that rain may benefit the crops, or promote the verdure of the clover fields,—that the drought may be needful just at that season to dry up certain marshes and prevent disease, and mildly suggests that the Omnipotent being, whose laws of order have ruled the universe for so many ages, and have kept the countless stars in their orbits, yet have allowed no sparrow to fall to the ground by chance, *may possibly know*, in his infinite prescience, *somewhat* better than narrow-visioned, sense-circumscribed mortals, when it is well for the rain to descend or the sun to shine—the grumbler shakes his head—he is inaccessible to any such weak and visionary argument. He entertains the belief that *he* could have ordered many of these matters more judiciously and more satisfactorily for men's comfort. He is quite convinced that all the pumpkins should have grown upon oak trees and the little acorns upon the earth.

It never occurs to him that there is even a tinge of profanity in this rebellious and egotistic spirit; for the grumbler is often a profoundly pious man. But fault-finding with his All-wise Master, and railing at his inoffensive neighbor, are no sins according to his creed. He ignores the existence of Charity's veiling cloak, and eagerly bares the suspected shoulder of a companion that he may reveal the hidden brand which affords him a sufficient pretext to

"Abhor
In Christ's name meekly."

Besides these Don Quixote malcontents, who are waging perpetual war with shadows and distorted realities, there exists an inferior race of grumblers—a petty, fretful, carping set—who expend the whole strength of their intollects in quarrelling about trifles, and magnifying straws of resistance into iron bars of opposition. *They* are afflicted by the most subtle and intangible torments, and pass their lives in ceaseless lamentation over their hourly and irremediable trials. Their clothes can never by any persuasion be induced to fit—all the gnats in the world are in league to sting them—they never fail to stumble over the smallest stone in their way, and their waspish buzzings of discontent torture the ears of serener beings without respite.

One of the strangest phases in the lives of these grumblers is the miraculous change often effected by a great affliction—the beneficent influence of a positive calamity. It suddenly awakens them to the sense that there is something in the world more important than their own discomfort and the short-comings of their neighbors. They rise up from the pressure of a heavy sorrow as though strengthened by its very weight, and fling off all lesser cares as the lion shakes the dew-drops from his mane. By a single effort they arm themselves against all the minor miseries that agonized their lives, and endure the actual affliotion with marvellous patience. The irritable, contentious grumbler who groaned at the tickling of a feather, and half-expired at the prick of a pin, bows meekly beneath the hard blow, and seems for the first time to be impressed with the conviction that the stroke was dealt by a hand divine. Especially "sweet are the uses of Adversity" to such temperaments, and on them the very greatest blessing we can invoke is "May a heavy but chastening misfortune fall quickly upon their heads!"